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Contents.

	PAGE
Notes of the Month ..	1
The Morning of the Times. By Ullin	2
College, Church, and Christian Society. By G. V. C. ..	3
A Book for the Month—"Outspoken Essays" ..	4
Social Service Notes ..	5
The Christian Social Crusade. By Rev. E. H. Pickering, M.A.	7
Memorial Notice — Mr. John Gibson	9
Lesson Notes	10
Reports — All Souls' Church; Banbridge; Comber; Crumlin; Holywood; Newry ..	12

Notes of the Month.

To all our readers and friends hearty greetings and all good wishes for the New Year.

The year 1919 will stand out in the history of our own times as memorable for many important events. In the first place, we then began to realise clearly the completeness of the Allied victory and to understand something of its significance for mankind. Bad as things have been in some respects, we cannot doubt that they would have been infinitely worse had victory rested with the Central Powers. Hence it was perfectly fitting that we sought to give due expression to our gratitude to Almighty God for victorious peace. Naturally, along with other Christian Churches, we found opportunity for services of praise and thanksgiving. The consolidation of the victorious results, and attempts to place international affairs on a normal basis, fell to the representatives of the Great Powers, especially those meeting in Paris. It is yet too soon to expect that this great task has shown marked fruition. But a good beginning has been made, and we trust that during the new year great and growing good will result. One feature of the year has been the re-absorption in civil life of hundreds of thousands of young men whom the war had scattered on the seas and far-flung battle lines. We have received back again with deep thankfulness valued members of our religious household, and have thought with grateful affection of the results they helped to achieve. The bodies of some rest in honoured graves in Flanders or in France, making ever sacred for us the spots which witnessed their immortal deeds and now enshrine their mortal remains. If their sacrifice is not to be vain, we who live on must manifest a higher sense of duty and an enlarged and more enlightened loyalty to truth and righteousness. Further, we must resolve that out of the travail and turmoil of war a fair civilisation will emerge. The League of Nations must be made a reality, broad-based upon the popular will. It is an easy thing to rail at politicians, but it will come with ill grace from any whose function is merely to criticise without an earnest endeavour to understand and to act. Only a strong, intelligent, and enlightened public opinion can do away with secret diplomacy and make the great

issues of war and peace the concern of the many and not the playthings of the few. We have put down the mighty from their seats: it now remains our task to complete the process by exalting the humble and meek. Democracy is a watchword and a cry—it must be made a spiritual force and become a truly civilising power.

* *

During the war and since its close much was said and written about the Churches closing their divided ranks to achieve an abiding unity. We must confess that as yet little has been accomplished to make good the verbal references. It is true that in some quarters certain Churches have formulated plans of cohesion and co-operation, but these have not been submitted to the test of practical application. And yet it must be seen that if the Churches are content to go back to chaotic contentions and to resume their petty insularities the cause of organised religion will receive an incalculable injury. There never was a time when practical religion was more needed or more likely to be welcomed than at present. There are wounds to be healed, waste places to be repaired, new temples of humanity to be erected. Long centuries ago a great prophet made this reproach against his professedly religious people: "They have healed also the heart of my people lightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace." The Churches and their members to-day which talk glibly of ecclesiastical peace and engage in no harmonious, whole-hearted efforts for a better world will merit and indubitably be open to a like reproach. May we hope that they will rise to the height of their great duty.

* *

Relative to the article by Dr. John Campbell in the November number of the Magazine on the family history of the late Mr. John Francis Mulligan, the Rev. James Kennedy writes to inform us that the Rev. James Mulligan, who for 32 years ministered to the Moira congregation, commenced his ministry in Cairncastle. Whilst there he married Miss M'Cullough, daughter of a much respected solicitor of Larne. They had one child, a son of great intellectual ability, who won a scholarship in Queen's College, Belfast, when under fifteen years of age, as did the late Dr. Davidson at about the same age. Young Mulligan obtained a high appointment in India. He married and died early there, leaving three children, one of them unborn at the time of his death. Of this family one became a barrister, and was at a time connected with the Second Congregation, Belfast, but, adds Mr. Kennedy, I have not now heard anything of him for many years.

THE MORNING OF THE TIMES.

Well, were it not a pleasant thing
To fall asleep with all one's friends;
To pass with all our social ties
To silence from the paths of men;
And every hundred years to rise
And learn the world and sleep again;
For we are ancients of the earth,
And in the morning of the times.

—TENNYSON.

The poet wrote of how the sleeper would awake "on science grown to more, on secrets of the brain, the stars," "The vast Republics, the Federations and the Powers." Pilgrims of eternity, coming down from all eternity, passing through time into eternity, another milestone on our journey is reached; "thus far the Lord hath led us on," and wherever this little magazine may now find its way, may it carry with it an influence of happiness, may it bear with it a blessing from above, that you, its reader, may be cheered and inspired, not by these poor words, but by the power to which they are consecrated, the power that makes all things new, the power of an endless life. Old manners change, old customs pass, and some of us stand bewildered and confused amid it all. Scarce has the din of war subsided, still from Russia come reports of atrocities unnameable, cruel beyond imagination. A dark fiend calling itself Atheism is persecuting Christianity, declaring a war of extermination against Christ. Here in the West, the war has left the nations on the verge of bankruptcy, and all the skill of experts will be needed to steer

clear of a great international collapse. In our own island home foul murder and assassination besmirch the name of Erin, while everywhere labour troubles grow more perplexing, threatening the danger of a class-war more deadly than that between nations.

Have faith in God, God who is in the hearts of men, God who was revealed in Christ. "He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment seat." He sits as the refiner and purifier of silver, and on the surface the dross accumulates, hiding His image; but He skims off the dross, and when His face is perfectly reflected, then the process shall be complete. The dross of human nature, the cruelty, the lust, the greed, are coming to the surface. Tests, severe and searching, follow rapidly one after the other. Yet God hath not left Himself without witness. Churches may fail in the crisis, and be content with uttering platitudes; but here and there are a few, to whom still the things of the Spirit are supreme, and who strive to stand firm, to be alert for the Word which shall yet be spoken, and to which the world will only be too keen to listen.

Fortunes are being rapidly made, no doubt to be as rapidly lost; prices are out of all proportion to those of a few years ago; the standard of value in money can scarcely be gauged, and yet there is a wild orgy of spending. "In New York," we read, "there are no poor, only the rich and the less rich." Yet, above, there is the Silent Watcher, forgotten, unheeded, and He has His great plan, and everything fits into that plan, and therein is our confidence.

We reach now the end of the second decade of the twentieth century. Twenty years ago, the older among us read and heard of the glories of the century that was closing—of its inventions, its discoveries, its great men and women, and far greater things were anticipated for the new century. One of the great events at the close of 1919 is the flight by air to Australia—a marvellous accomplishment. Scientists are earnestly concentrating on matter and energy, and new resources of power and light and heat may be discovered before long. Politics may become more of a science than heretofore. But of what avail further discoveries, some of which could make the world an impossible place to live in, if men do not learn the meaning of Brotherhood. Christ came with "good news;" that same Gospel needs now to be applied to life in terms convincing and understandable, adapted to present needs, in words simple enough for a child to understand, and yet with depths of meaning to appeal to people of every age. Under all the swirl of unrest there is a force moving steadily forward to happiness and advancement, that force which none can turn aside nor stay. Deep down in your hearts it is there, and it is harmonious, it is a melody, a song, it is peace. He whose nature is Bliss, Supreme Father of all, wishes His children, now, everywhere, this opening New Year happiness. To you and to all others—a Happy New Year.

[COLLEGE, CHURCH, AND CHRISTIAN SOCIETY.

The moral life of man is so large and comprehensive a thing, it has so many sides and aspects, that whenever we attempt to give a fair and complete account of it, we seem to be driven to contradict in one sentence what we have said in another. Christianity is a principle that binds all men to each other, and makes them members one of another. It breaks down all walls of division, separating individuals, families and nations from each other; it repudiates all prejudice of rank and caste of race and custom, and bids mankind to recognise each other simply as brethren. The fire of its charity burns up every grudge and repugnance, every doubt and suspicion that makes men regard each other with alien eyes, thereby putting an end to all the waste of human existence in conflict and competition by binding them into a unity, animated by one spirit and will. That unity is a unity of accordant and consenting wills. Each man still lives his own life; he has still to discover and accept his own duties; to accept as true only the teaching that commends itself to his own reason and conscience.

The Christian ideal of the combination of social unity with individual independence has, perhaps, never been completely attained in the history of any college, church, or society. Men seeking to live their own lives, withdrew into themselves and jealously guarded themselves each against the other—the one apt to render unavailing the union which it secured by its enslavement of the reason and will of man, while the other was apt to mar the good of its emancipation by the isolation and unbrotherly conflict and competition it brought along with it. The one thing needful is to find some method of uniting what is good in Socialism with what is good in Individualism. We are to be members one of another, without interfering with the free development of each individual life. College and church life are a training and expression of the combining them in one. To see just when and where either becomes excessive because it tends to repress the other, to discover how to call forth individual energies without bringing about a kind of competition that makes us enemies instead of fellow workers, is a problem upon the right solution of which more than upon anything else rests the future unity of both Church and Nation. Plato tells us in his REPUBLIC, the ideal society is one in which each has the opportunity to do his own work, and has individual joy in doing it, just because it is the society in which no one does anything simply for himself, but only as the servant of the society. No one can rise far above the society to which he belongs, because his advance is to a great extent dependent upon his carrying others with him. And it is equally true that no one can do any service to his society except by a process which enriches his individual life.

Cannot we apply this double lesson to the little society to which we belong? Here, as in the wider world, the social and the individual are indissolubly united. We cannot be our own keeper without also being our brother's keeper, and we cannot be our brother's keeper without being our own. Everyone carries with him a certain moral atmosphere, which to a great extent determines the relations into which he comes with his fellow-men. Thus, men are continually shedding off, as it were, some part of their personality into the society around them, and the tone of that society is the result of the unconscious acting and re-acting of their characters. The whole weight of evil that is in our society is dragging us down, and the whole force of the good that is in it is helping us up. Our own private victory or defeat inevitably produces some rise or fall in the general spirit of the society, assisting or hindering others in the struggle of their moral life. A young man brought up in a society whose moral and intellectual tone is always pure and high, has by that very fact had his courage raised to live and attempt things of which he otherwise would never have dreamed—"Greater works than MINE shall he do" in THAT SOCIETY.

May our little society of the Non-Subscribing Church of Ireland develop into a united, free, and brotherly fellowship, with a growing purity and strength of character, darkened by no remembrance of neglected opportunity, or of any action unworthy of the Christian name.

"Say not, 'It matters not to me;
My brother's weal is *His* behoof!'
For, in this wondrous human web
If your life's warp, his life is woof.
Woven all together are the threads,
And you and he are in one loom:
For good or ill, for glad or sad,
Your lives must share one common doom.
Then let the daily shuttle glide,
Wound full with threads of kindly care,
That life's increasing length may be
Not only strongly wrought, but Fair."

G. V. C.

A Book for the Month.

"OUTSPOKEN ESSAYS."

Thanks to the flippancy of catch penny journalists, Dr. W. B. Inge has become widely known as "the melancholy Dean." A few sentences, taken apart from their context, from outspoken utterances during the war sufficed for this shallow judgment, but those who took the trouble to read the whole

of what the Dean of St. Paul's said on these occasions, to say nothing of those who were acquainted with his "Christian Mysticism" and "The Philosophy of Plotinus" and his other works, knew better, and recognised in him a distinguished scholar, a profound thinker, and one who is uninfluenced by popular opinion in speaking out his mind. His recently published volume of "Outspoken Essays" has been hailed by one competent critic as "one of the few books of our time that will be read and studied fifty years hence."

The "Outspoken Essays" cover a wide range of subjects, but there is an underlying unity. Throughout there is the application of a sturdy and rather unorthodox Christianity to important political, social and religious problems. The first essay, on "Our Present Discontents," is too severely critical of democracy, and would be more effective if greater stress had been laid on the sins of plutocracy which are only hinted at in passing—"Christianity, in condemning the selfish and irresponsible use of money, seeks to remove one of the chief causes of social bitterness. Senseless extravagance is the best friend of revolution." Nevertheless, it contains many wise words, and ends in a note of courage and confidence. One would like to quote many of the pithy and thought-provoking sayings this book contains, but lack of space prevents, and the real value of the book can only be discovered by reading the whole.

Dr. Inge's main position is—"The religious basis will be a blend of Christian Platonism and Christian Stoicism, since it must be founded on that faith in absolute spiritual values which is common to Christianity and Platonism, with that sturdy defiance of tyranny and popular folly which was the strength of Stoicism. It must not be affiliated to any religious organisation, otherwise it will certainly be exploited in denominational interests." This, taken by itself, may seem a severe and forbidding view of Christianity, but the Dean takes much for granted. "It is not necessary in such an essay as this to write out the Beatitudes. . . . It is not necessary to remind the reader that in Christianity all the paraphernalia of life are valued very lightly; that all the good and all the evil which exalt or defile a man have their seat within him, in his own character; that we are sent into this world to suffer and to conquer suffering; that it is more blessed to give than to receive; that love is the great revealer of the mysteries of life; that here we have no continuing city, and must therefore set our affections and lay up our treasures in heaven; that the things that are seen are temporal, and the things that are not seen are eternal. This is the Christian religion. It is a form of idealism, and idealism means a belief in absolute or spiritual values."

Dr. Inge has no great hope in the future of organised religion. "Organised religion has been a failure ever since the first concordat between Church and State under Constantine the Great. The Church of England in its corporate capacity has never seemed to respect anything but organised force." One might be tempted to ask why the Dean remains in the Church of England and whether organised religion necessarily implies an alliance between Church and State.

In the essays on "Dr. Gore and the Church of England," and on "Cardinal Newman," his own attitude towards the national Church and Roman Catholicism is indicated. "The moral end of Scholasticism is a mummified philosophy of authority, in which there are no problems to solve, but a great many dead pundits to consult."

"The Essays on "St. Paul," "The Indictment Against Christianity," and "Survival and Immorality," are packed with deep thought and constructive as well as destructive criticism. Though we may not always agree, we are always stimulated and generally helped to a clearer view and a larger faith.

SOCIAL SERVICE NOTES.

Dr. John Campbell's Lecture on "The Prevention of Infection by Food."

Those who were wise enough to attend the Social Service Meeting in the Central Hall on Wednesday evening,

26th November (and the wise still seem to be very few), were amply rewarded, for Dr. Campbell's lecture was all that could be desired—simple, concise, bright and informative. The doctor is one of the foremost men in the medical profession, and, in addition to his abilities, is full of a quiet zeal for the public well-being. He began by deploring the minute amount of publicity given to questions of health—a literally **vital** subject — and suggested that, among other things, a daily bulletin should be issued in a conspicuous place in our newspapers. For, in addition to Acts of Parliament, useful and necessary in their place, the main factor in improving the public health was an enlightened and active public conscience. The first food he dealt with was **water**, because it takes first place in importance. There was always a danger that, despite all precautions, the water supply might be contaminated. For instance, a few cases of typhoid in the catchment area have led to an outbreak of typhoid through drinking the water. All water for drinking purposes ought to be boiled to be on the safe side. The habitual use of tea was probably a great safeguard, because it ensured that a large proportion of the daily ration of the liquid consumed had been rendered safe by boiling. Moreover, water plays a most important part in the production of butter and milk; but here we are bound to depend ultimately on the good sense and good will of the farmers and dairymen. Next comes **Milk**. This food is of the utmost importance, but unfortunately it is a great source of disease. It is liable to be contaminated by the animal which produces it, by those who handle it, by the vessels in which it is kept, and by the methods by which it is distributed. Tuberculosis was the chief disease due to contaminated milk. As things are at present, we are bound to boil the milk to make it safe, but this destroys certain important qualities. What is really needed is for the general public to demand with one voice that the milk shall be pure. This means that, in addition to all the ordinary precautions, the milk should be pasteurized in bulk before delivery, and that vastly improved methods of delivery should be adopted. We could make pure milk a practical possibility if we really took the matter up seriously. Dr. Campbell then dealt with other foods, such as meat, bread, vegetables, and fruit. Meat must be well cooked to be safe. The main difficulty with bread was the method of delivery, and the public should insist, among other things, on the bread being delivered in paper bags. Vegetables and fruit, eaten raw, were very dangerous, especially those grown in or in contact with the soil, which frequently contained much dangerously infectious matter, causing chiefly intestinal diseases. Even fruits and vegetables, which do not grow in contact with the soil, can become sources of infection if eaten raw from the way in which they are handled. Here again an enlightened public opinion would be the chief preventative. Dr. Campbell then had a weighty word to utter about infection from all kinds of food due to gross ignorance or carelessness on the part of individuals. All food should be protected from contact with dust, flies, mice and rats, and domestic pets. The general behaviour in this matter was most reprehensible. Such simple precautions as, for instance, keeping the food under covers, were more often neglected than observed. Yet the diseases due to such neglect were numerous and unpleasant. The lecturer anticipated the possible flippant rejoinder that since food is so dangerous we had better do without it altogether, by arguing that its danger was almost always due to ignorance or carelessness. He concluded by saying that "Laws relating to public health are a necessity, and have an important place in the scheme of life, but we need, in addition, an educated public opinion to back up our laws. This can only be very gradually built up by the work of individuals and of societies like this, and, above all, by the assistance of the newspapers.

THE STUDY CIRCLE.—Despite the devoted assistance of able leaders at the few meetings held, the attendance has been so poor that, as will be seen

from an advertisement elsewhere in this paper, the Circle has had to be discontinued. Both for the Study Circle and the public lectures, the executive have sought to enlist the best possible ability, but we cannot ask busy and important people to help us if we cannot provide an audience.

ERNEST H. PICKERING, Hon. Sec.

THE CHRISTIAN SOCIAL CRUSADE.

An address delivered before the Unity Guild on 12th November, 1919, by Rev. E. H. Pickering, M.A.

BY REV. E. H. PICKERING, M.A.

(Continued.)

Our religion, I would remind you, means absolutely nothing except practical Christinaity, and if we show no zeal for practical Christianity then our Church has become a nonentity—a mere skeleton, dry bones without life.

I say this, because unless you have some interest in our own little attempt at social service the Christian social crusade of Dr. Gore will have no meaning for you. For the crusade is based on the presumption that in every Christian Church there is a growing desire to engage in Christian social work. In England this presumption is not altogether baseless. In all the various Protestant Churches, from the Episcopalians to the Quakers and Unitarians, and in the Roman Catholic Church, there exist more or less powerful unions engaged in social service. And the result of the formation of these unions has been most significant. In various towns where several of these denominational unions exist the discovery has been made that they can only accomplish what they want by working together. And along with this has come the discovery that by engaging in social service their sectarian differences cease to count. Hence here and there have been formed *interdenominational* councils, which, meeting together in a neutral place, have begun to exercise a very real influence in the government of the districts where they exist. And what else could we expect? After all, the professing Christians, if banded together for a definite piece of good work, can bring numbers and influence to bear which the secular authorities cannot disregard. Here then we have two important facts. In the first place, Christians of the various sects are beginning to find that when they sincerely set to work to apply Christian principles in social work their sectarianism counts for little or nothing, and that they are all at bottom Christians, nothing more and nothing less. In the second place, when the various denominations have banded themselves together they have found themselves wielding a power which no secular authority can afford to disregard.

And yet when this Social Service Union of ours was first mooted quite a number of misunderstanding persons, who seem to exist for the purpose of thwarting our ideals, condemned it on the ground that it was dragging politics into our religion. Think, think a moment what we really are wanting! We are striving to be Christians not only in name, but in fact. Compared with that, what do politics matter? It is not for us to care what particular forms our political activity may take so long as we make our Christinaity fruitful. Christianity should come first with Christians. And my contention is that wherever these social service unions have been at work they have deepened their members' knowledge of Christianity and made Christianity a more potent force.

Arising then from the experience of these isolated interdenominational councils, Dr. Gore is seeking to develop an interdenominational organization which shall include the British Islands, and eventually all Christendom. The first pamphlet issued by Dr. Gore's Committee has the following weighty statement:—

"We know and deplore the divisions of Christendom, and we do not in the least underrate the difficulties involved in healing ancient wounds and restoring violated fellowship. . . . But we say deliberately that in the region of moral or social questions we desire all Christians to begin at once to act together as if they were one body in one visible fellowship. This could be done by all

alike without any injury to theological principles. And to bring all Christians together to act in this one department of life as one visible body would involve no loss and manifold gain. We should get to know and trust one another; we should learn to act together, and win for our action on social questions in town and country a weight and effectiveness which it is idle to expect for the action of a variety of sects and bodies."

If anything can save Christianity it is this scheme of Dr. Gore's, for Christianity can only be saved in so far as it saves others. Whilst a large number of Churchmen of different sects are disputing as to ways and means for a reunion, Dr. Gore puts his finger on the spot by suggesting that in the first place Churchmen should work together in applying the fundamental Christian principles to social work. Already he has achieved a unique success, for the first Committee of the Christian Social Crusade includes representatives of every variety of Christianity in Great Britain.

What response can we make to Dr. Gore's self-sacrificing leadership of this new and glorious crusade? Things in Ireland are *very* different from things in England. But as I have said, there is one thing we must do if ever this crusade is to make a beginning in this island, and that one thing is what we can easily do. We can develop our Union for Social Service—at present the only one of its kind existing in Ireland—so as to inspire the members of other Churches to found unions, and then ultimately unite in interdenominational committees. So far as I can see, if our Union fails the Christian Social Crusade in Ireland will have to be postponed indefinitely, for, although other Churches are here and there doing excellent social work in various directions, none of them is doing it precisely and definitely as an application of fundamental Christian principles to social life, but rather under the ægis of denominationalism. When once even one active Social Service Union exists then there is a strong hope of far-reaching developments. For instance, the Belfast Council of Social Welfare would afford an excellent meeting place for all denominations, but it must have something to work on.

So I entreat you to do all in your power to make our Union for Social Service effective. One reason for your indifference is, I believe, that you don't understand what the Union means. All I can say is that it cannot mean anything unless there are folk willing to join and give it a meaning. The only meaning we can have is the determination and ability to do something in connection with such things as—

(1) wide reaching international problems;

(2) the intricate problems of the relations between capital and labour;

(3) and more especially, for it is in so far as these problems are solved that the other wider problems will find their solution, the problem of child life, involving the problems of health, education, housing, morality, labour, street trading, and the rest. Surely we as practical Christians ought to be filled with a desire to deal with problems such as this? I should never have attempted to found this Union unless I had believed that in our body of Churches there was a great number of folk inspired with the desire to give practical effect to their Christian principles. Our Union cannot create that desire, and if the desire does not exist then we cannot have a Union. But I will be momentarily optimistic enough to presume that the desire exists, and if so the only thing left for you is to join the Union. Its meaning you will discover as you meet together. You will find that there is this or that piece of practical social work to be done; you will learn more about existing conditions and where they fall short of the Christian ideal and how they can be remedied; you will, if nothing else, develop a keener interest in municipal and national politics, and realise the importance of voting for the right man or woman irrespective of narrow party or sectarian ties. More than that I cannot say. It is downright unfair to place on me the onus of showing the Union to have a detailed and definite meaning before you join. For as soon as the Union has a detailed and definite

meaning it has become a real success; and how can we hope for success without members, without interest, without funds? Patience and perseverance are necessary. If your one aim is to discover ways and means of making Christianity a vital force then you will willingly contribute the patience and perseverance. It is unfortunate, of course, and I say this in all sincerity, that the Union has not a more efficient Secretary. But that is not my fault. I don't want the job. All I want is to see the work done, and if nobody else will take it on, then I have to do it. But I should never have mooted the idea at all unless I had believed that there was a real desire among our Church members to do such work as the Union aims at doing. I confess that I am not competent to do all this work myself; I need your help, especially the help of active and enterprising young people. The Unity Guild has officially given its support to our Union, but it depends on the members of the Guild to make that support effective. Now, I don't wish to shame or blame our young people, but I do wish seriously to ask them whether they think they have already exhausted the meaning of the religion of which they are adherents, and which furnishes them with so many opportunities for pleasure and instruction! To them I ask, "What do ye more than others?" It is the young men and women who save the world. Every great and good work has received its driving force from young people. Would you do even less than others? Have you none of that authentic fire of youth which in the past has lit up the world with marvellous heroism and ideals? Has the divine spirit so soon departed from you that your ears and eyes are deaf and blind to the suffering, sorrows, and sins of the world calling for redemption? Youth: real youth is the most blessed, the most potent force in every noble work! Is there none of that real youth in our midst to-day? Come forward, I say, not carpingly, not sullenly, but divinely conscious of the high destiny of man, and your share in its achievement. You are called to a new Crusade, a Crusade in which the rank and file count more than leaders, a Crusade to which all can contribute something. In so far as you profess and call yourselves Christians, in so far as the principles of our Church have any meaning for you, I trust you will not fail.

Memorial Notice.

MR. JOHN GIBSON.

Early in the morning of December 1st there passed away at his residence, West End Park, Balmoral, Belfast, Mr. John Gibson, who had completed his 72nd year. For some time past he had been in indifferent health, but had been able to attend to his usual avocations till the Wednesday evening previous, when illness, quickly followed by pneumonia, set in, and soon brought a useful life to its close on earth.

Mr. Gibson was a native of Larne, and a son of the late Mr. Robert Gibson, of Blackcave, an excellent man, who was an elder in the congregation associated with the names of Revs. Classon Porter and James Kennedy. A school teacher named Robinson, a grand old man, who hailed from Moira district, made the deceased his heir to a good farm in Cairncastle, and here he lived till his removal, upwards of 30 years ago, to Balmoral, consequent upon his appointment as landsteward to Messrs. Musgrave, of Drumglass House. Soon after he came to Balmoral he joined the Dunmurry congregation, in which he took an active interest as a member of the committee and as treasurer. The latter office he ably filled for 13 years. He was also greatly interested in the Cairncastle and Larne congregations.

The funeral took place on December 3rd, the place of interment being the family burying ground in the M'Garel Cemetery, Larne, the Revs. James Kennedy and J. A. Kelly officiating.

Mr. Gibson is survived by a widow (formerly a Miss Moore, of Larne), and seven children—five sons and two daughters. One of the latter is married and lives in Canada, and of the sons three have served in the great war. To the widow and family the sympathy of their many friends is extended.

LESSON NOTES FOR TECHERS.

[To be used in accordance with the Scheme of instruction for 1920, issued by the Sunday School Committee of the N.S.P.C.I.]

THE PRACTICAL TEACHING OF JESUS. The New Testament lessons for 1920 have been drawn up on the lines of Rev. A. W. Fox's book, "The Practical Teaching of Jesus of Nazareth," which can be obtained at the Depository for 1s. 6d. In these lesson notes it will be assumed that the teacher has this book for reference.

4th January. The Beatitudes (I.). Matthew v. 1-5.

The teacher should point out that the Sermon on the Mount was addressed to disciples. "His disciples came unto him, and he opened his mouth and taught *them*." Jesus began his teaching with the words: "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand," but in the Sermon on the Mount there is very little about repentance and no parables of the kingdom. Having responded to this call, the disciples were now ready for positive and personal teaching.

Read the first Psalm to the class. This Psalm may be called the Old Testament Beatitudes, and a comparison with the beatitudes of Jesus will be useful.

Impress upon the scholars that it is not eight different kinds of people who are called blessed, but the eight different characteristics balance and complete one another and go to make the ideal Christian.

Verse 3. In Luke's Gospel this beatitude has a different form. "Blessed are *ye* poor." Not all the poor, but those who were poor because they were disciples. Those who value discipleship more than wealth. But it is not poverty that is blessed. The poor in spirit are the very opposite to the Laodiceans who said, "I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." It is hard for the well-to-do to be other than unteachably self-complacent. That is why it is hard for the rich to enter the kingdom.

Verse 4. When we have satisfied the first condition, and have not allowed riches, or the pursuit of riches, to render us self-satisfied and unteachable, we must take care not to fall into selfishness or easy-going fatalism. "They that mourn" means not only they that can feel for others, but also they that can mourn for their own shortcomings. There is false sorrow: "the sorrow of the world worketh death," because it embitters and hardens and makes us impatient. True sorrow is the "godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation."

Verse 5. We can best understand what is meant by the meek by remembering "the man Moses was very meek, above all the men that were upon the earth." Yet Moses brought an unwilling people out of captivity and made a nation out of a tribe of slaves. This beatitude balances the first two. Those who are teachable and also sensitive to evil are inclined to be moved by righteous indignation and to denounce everything. Evil is not overcome by being bitter or violent, but by being, like Moses, persistent and assiduous in well-doing.

11th January. The Beatitudes (II.). Matthew v. 6-12.

Verse 6. We all think we know what to hunger and thirst means if dinner is a bit late, but try to imagine the feelings of a shipwrecked crew who have been days without food or water. Hunger and thirst as a strong craving, which must be satisfied, or we perish. Blessed are they who have such a strong craving for righteousness. To be as keen about being good as we are about winning a game. To feel that life is not worth living if we cannot live up to the highest standards. If we have this craving we cannot be satisfied with good, but press on to better and best. A boy once won a prize for drawing. The lady who gave the prizes said to him, "You get the prize because your drawing is the best." But he answered, "No, that is not my best, I haven't done my best yet."

Verse 7. The merciful are the considerate. One day a man in a crowd trod upon another man's foot. This was a hasty person, and he turned and struck the offender a violent blow on the head. "Ah, sir," said the stricken

man quietly, "you will be sorry for what you have done when you know that I am blind."

Verse 8. The pure in heart are the pure-minded, but Jesus means even more than freedom from sensuality: he means single-minded as well as pure-minded. If we live out our lives with the single desire to know and to do God's will we shall see God. If you put fresh milk into a dirty jug the milk turns sour. Good teaching will be turned to an evil purpose unless we are clean within.

Verse 9. The peacemakers are not busybodies poking their noses into other people's affairs. To make peace does not mean to compromise with evil. What makes strife? Enmity. We best make peace not by ignoring evil or by slaying our enemies, but by slaying the enmity, overcoming in others and in ourselves the feelings that make for strife. Peacemaking is not a tame business; it is not just being easy-going: it is being keen and working hard for the things that make for peace.

Verses 10-12. These verses lay the stress on the necessity for courage. Christianity is not mawkish; it demands courage to stand alone, if needs be to suffer for conscience sake. Donald Hankey in "A Student in Arms" says, "True religion is betting one's life that there is a God."

Good illustrations will be found in Mr. Fox's book.

18th January. The salt of the earth and the light of the world. Matthew v. 13-16.

The beatitudes give us the characteristics of the ideal man. Now arises the question: how is the ideal man to act? He is to be like salt which flavours food. The salt has only to be itself and its work is done. The Christian has only to be true to himself and he is bound to influence others. A brave soldier does not argue with his timid companions: he just does his duty bravely, and, lo, they follow him.

> Nor knowest thou what argument
> Thy life to thy neighbour's creed has lent.

If the salt ceases to be salty it is no good; if the Christian ceases to be Christ-like he does more harm than good.

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world"; he also said, "Ye are the light of the world." What he is we should strive to become. Not to hide your light does not mean to show off. Never set yourself up as a good example, just be true to your best self and keep lit the light which Jesus has given you by his teaching and his life. If we begin to think how good we are we cease to be good, and are only conceited. Do good because you like doing it and because it is pleasing to God.

> A trust to keep I have,
> A God to glorify.

Tell the story of "Pippa Passes." A poor little girl singing her happy song unconsciously influences those who hear her.

25th January. The fulfilment of the law. Matthew v. 17-20.

At the end of the Sermon on the Mount we are told that the people "were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." In Mark's Gospel these same words are recorded in connection with his preaching in Capernaum. The common people, rather than the disciples, are likely to have been astonished, and their astonishment would lead them to regard him as a destroyer of the law. Jesus is anxious to show that he came not to destroy, but to fulfil. The law for the most part deals with actions; Jesus fulfils the law by going beneath the actions to the motives. It is difficult to frame laws to cover all actions, but that is no reason why we should disregard the law. Many a man manages to keep on the right side of the law, yet at the same time acts dishonourably. To tell a lie is wrong. If you say nothing you cannot tell a lie, but if by your silence you allow a wrong impression to be made you are acting a lie. Jesus was not satisfied with the laws, "Thou shalt not kill" and "Thou shalt not commit adultery," but he would have us keep them.

The righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. We must not think that all Scribes and Pharisees were hypocrites, but their habit of paying attention chiefly to the letter of the law tended to make them so. They were

apt to think that if they did not actually break any law they were perfect. To let your righteousness exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees means to have regard for the spirit of the law as well as its letter; not only to refrain from killing, but to conquer all hatred and envy and malice. In a prison the criminals have to keep the law because discipline is strict and punishments heavy, but many of them hate doing it. A boy may behave himself in school because he is afraid of the cane and do his lessons because he knows he must, but he will not be so good or get on as well as the boy who behaves because he is well-mannered and does his lessons because he likes them.

G. L. P.

Reports.

All Souls' Church.—A Sale of Work on behalf of All Souls' Church was held on 5th December, in the Rosemary Hall, Elmwood Avenue, and proved most successful. Rev. E. H. Pickering, M.A., who presided, said he had much pleasure in introducing Mrs. Moore, a lady who really needed no introduction to them, as she had assisted them last year in getting up their pageant. She belonged to a sister church, and took a great interest in helping others. Mrs. James Moore, who was cordially received, said she was more accustomed to singing at bazaars than to opening them. She felt very highly honoured when she was asked to come and preside at the opening ceremony, and she hoped they would all spend plenty, as churches were always wanting money. In conclusion, Mrs. Moore formally declared the sale opened. The following were the stallholders:—Ladies' Work Stall—Mrs. Pickering, Mrs. W. Martin, Mrs. J. Wilkinson, and Miss Dobbin. Sunday School Stall—Miss J. Campbell. Useful Articles Competition Stall—Mrs. Love. Cake Competition—Mrs. R. Wilkinson and Miss Montgomery. Refreshment Stall—Miss Campbell and Miss Carmichael. The following were the winners of a series of baking competitions:—Gingerbread, Mrs. Adair; sponge sandwich, Miss E. M'Caw; shortbread, Miss Carmichael; oat cake, Miss Ashworth; soda bread, Mrs. Thomas. The entertainment included an interesting Irish Ceilid, arranged by Mr. F. J. Biggar, and in the evening the production of a comedy in three acts, entitled "The Rival Reformers," by the Rev. E. H. Pickering, M.A. Mr. Pickering, who was the author of the libretto for the Victory Pageant recently produced very successfully in the Rosemary Hall, has again displayed a good deal of skill in creating a comedy which, on its first production last evening, met with very cordial acceptance. The plot concerns the fortunes of "a leader of the Confederacy of Ruthless Reformers" and "a leader of the League of Amiable Amazons." These principal roles were cleverly taken by Mr. Jack Munn and Miss Maisie Martin, who admirably sustained the scenes in which the rival claims of the League leaders were advanced. In the concluding stages the rival sections unite, and, much to their own surprise, find that, while seemingly divided, the causes in which they are interested themselves had tended towards a harmonious result. A pretty episode in the play was the rendering of a song sung in chorus by the combined caste. The words were written by Rev. E. H. Pickering, who has exhibited another example of the skill he displayed in the Victory Pageant, and the music, which is very tuneful, has been composed by Mr. Teasdale Griffiths, F.R.C.O. Rev. E. H. Pickering took part in the play as "The Mysterious Stranger," and his interpretation contributed largely to the effectiveness of the production. Mr. G. C. May and Miss Maggie Neill, in the respective parts of "Grumpy Gregson," and "Widow Warlock," by their clever and spirited acting, contributed much of the comedy." The following also took part:—Misses Mona Martin, Ethel Martin, Kathleen Purdy, Evelyn Wilkinson, Ena Martin, Elsie Nash, Maggie Neill, Lily Neill, Violet Hastings, Eileen Miller, and Mildred Martin; Mr. G. Coffey May, Masters Frank Aspinall, Cecil Wilkinson, Harry Morgan Tom Blacoe, Stanley Morgan, and Ernest Erskine. The lighting effects

were skilfully managed by Mr. H. A. Miller. All the performers are members of or connected with All Souls' Sunday School.

* *

Banbridge.—On Friday evening, December 12th, 1919, a very enjoyable social was given by the young people and members of above church and their friends in the schoolrooms, in honour of Miss Annie Shields—Mr. A. M'Cammon occupying the chair, on the motion of Mr. Samuel Bell. The proceedings opened with games, a number of novel ones being introduced for the first time, and a most hearty tea, with toothsome accompaniments, was served after 9 o'clock. When tea was dispensed with, the interesting event of the evening took place—the presentation to Miss Shields of a tea service from the young people and their friends on the occasion of her forthcoming marriage. The presentation was gracefully made by Mrs. M'Cammon, who in a neat little speech wished the recipient the best of good wishes, and hoped that the token of friendship would always bring to pleasant remembrance her friends in the Church. Miss Shields feelingly replied as follows: Dear Mrs. M'Cammon and Friends,—With all my heart I wish to thank you for your very valuable gifts, and for the true friendship which prompted you to give them. I feel altogether unworthy of your extreme kindness. Any little service I was enabled to render to the Church was even far less than my duty, but you have been good enough to overlook my shortcomings. In accepting your presents I shall always be under a deep debt of gratitude to you all, and shall look back with pleasure to the kind friends at the Church.

"For She's a Jolly Good Fellow" was then sung in a rather uproarious manner, after which the programme was proceeded with. Miss Shields, Miss Hetty Graham and Miss Helen Stevenson contributed various songs, while the other sex was represented vocally by Messrs. Foster, Shields, M'Keown, and Carson. A vote of thanks was proposed to Mr. and Mrs. M'Cammon, the tea-makers and other helpers, and passed by acclamation. The proceedings terminated with the singing of Auld Lang Syne and God Save the King. Mrs. Bambrick, Miss Dornan and Miss Helen Stevenson were the pianists.

* *

Comber.—On Wednesday evening, December 3rd, a very enjoyable Social in connection with the newly-formed Young People's Society was held in the school-room of the above church. There was a good rally of the young people, and the proceedings were marked with a happy spontaneity and good fellowship which augurs well for the winter's work. The programme opened with a guessing competition of well-known advertisements, the winners being Mrs. Hugh Ferguson and Mr. Munroe Ferguson, to whom prizes were given. Afterwards a good selection of songs was rendered by Mrs. Hugh Ferguson, Mrs. M'Kee, and Miss Stewart, whilst M. Frame contributed a humorous recitation. Tea then followed, after which games and dances were indulged in, the music being provided by Mrs. Abernethy and Mrs. Munroe Ferguson. The accompaniments of the songs were acceptably rendered by Mrs. Johnson. The minister proposed a hearty vote of thanks to all the artistes who contributed to the programme, and to the young people who very kindly provided the tea. A most enjoyable evening was brought to a close by the singing of the National Anthem.

On Tuesday evening, December 16th, at the second meeting of the Society, the Rev. J. G. Davies gave a lecture on the "Religion of Islam." J. Miller Andrews, Esq., D.L., occupied the chair. Mr. Davies began his lecture with a brief sketch of the Life of the Prophet Mohammed, and then gave an analysis of his teaching as found in the Koran. He concluded his lecture by giving some striking illustrations of the prophet's genius as shown in his "Sayings."

On the motion of J. M. Andrews, Esq., a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Davies for his instructive and interesting lecture.

* *

Crumlin.—On Friday, December 5th, a whist drive and dance was held in the Masonic Hall, and in every way it was a most enjoyable and successful evening. The arrangements were under-

taken by the following :—Mrs. Bowen (secretary), Mr. F. Manderson (treasurer), Misses Manderson, Harkness and Thompson, and Messrs. F. Manderson, W. Hamilton, E. Harkness, and George Aicken. The hall was tastefully decorated for the occasion, and the guests numbered nearly 200. In the whist-drive Mrs. T. B. Hill Scott, Antrim, won the ladies' first prize, Mrs. George Rankin the second, and Miss Barrett the third. The gentlemen's prizes were won by Mr. Alfred Carse, Mr. J. Harkness, and Mr. A. M'Clelland. Prior to the dance a sumptuous supper was served. The music was provided by the Masserene Orchestra, who fulfilled their part to the delight of all. Rev. M. Watkins also rendered assistance with vocal items. The evening was a complete success. The Committee have a balance of about £70 towards the renovation fund, and their best thanks are tendered to kind friends from far and near for their generous and willing support.

* *

Holywood.—The Annual Meeting of the congregation was held after morning service on Sunday, November 30th, Mr. William Patterson presiding. The Committee's report and statement of accounts, which showed a good balance on the right side, were adopted on the motion of the chairman, seconded by Mr. W. H. Niall Nelson. The following were elected to the vacant places on the Committee :—Miss M'Alester, Dr. Greenfield, Messrs. H. Shannon and F. A. Robinson. The usual vote of thanks to the members of the choir was passed, and Mr. W. K. Graham was re-elected to represent the church on the Board of Governors of the Sullivan Schools. On the motion of the chairman, seconded by Mr. Nelson, it was resolved that a further sum of £25 be paid to the Minister as war bonus. Rev. G. L. Phelps briefly addressed the meeting, returning thanks for the war bonuses, and making an appeal for better attendance at our services. He concluded by proposing a vote of thanks to the Chairman, which was seconded by Mr. Robinson, and heartily carried.

On Tuesday, December 16th, a meeting of the Total Abstinence Society was held, which was a departure from our usual ways. A junior branch of the society was formed to be run as a Band of Hope. A good beginning was made, and a number of pledges taken. A short address was given by Rev. G. L. Phelps, and a number of the young people recited. A committee of young people is being formed, and it is hoped to hold the meetings fortnightly. An ordinary meeting for adults will be held in January in addition to the Band of Hope meetings.

* *

Newry.—A very pretty and successful little Christmas Sale of Work (which was followed by a splendid variety entertainment at night) was held in the school-room of the Newry Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, on Friday, December 12th, the proceeds being in aid of the funds of the church.

The school-room was most tastefully decorated for the occasion by Messrs. James Thompson, Joseph Mitchell, and H. M'Kaig, and with the neatly laid-out tables, presented an attractive appearance when the opening ceremony took place at 4 p.m. by Miss Irvine, of Warrenpoint.

The Rev. G. J. Slipper, in introducing Miss Irvine, explained that as they had not had a garden party this year, they thought it would be well to have that Sale of Work to help the funds of the church. He had great pleasure in introducing Miss Irvine, who was an old and tried friend of that congregation. The name of Irvine had been an honoured name in that town for many generations, and they were glad to have her there that evening as a representative of the family. Miss Irvine, who was warmly received, expressed great pleasure in being able to be present, and in declaring the Sale open, hoped it would be successful, and that they would all enjoy it and also the entertainment that was to follow. Miss Warnock, in proposing a vote of thanks to Miss Irvine, paid a tribute to her loyalty and generosity, not only to the church as a

church, but also to individual members of it. Mr. Robert Rowland seconded. Miss Irvine suitably replied, and the sales were then proceeded with. The following were the stallholders :—Work Stall—Mrs. Slipper, Mrs. Henning, Mrs. Gracey, and Mrs. Robert Lockhart. Produce, Cake and Sweet Stall—Mrs. J. A. C. Rowland, Miss Mitchell, Miss Berry, and Miss Rainey. Refreshments —Miss S. Warnock, Miss M. Lockhart, Mrs. R. J. M'Combe, Miss Ina M'Combe, and Miss M. Smith. The following took part in the programme :—Sergeant Corcoran, Miss E. Sterritt, Miss S. Littlewood, Misses M. and S. Lockhart, Master Jos. F. Agnew, Sergeant-Major Williams, Miss Joy Chapman, Miss Audrey Smartt, Miss Loo Topp, Sergeant Wickes, Master Bob Hennessey, Miss Evelyn Leslie, Mr. Jack Heather, Miss Marie Scott, and Miss Dorothy Sinclair. Accompanist—Miss May Cleland., A.T.C.I. The entertainment was greatly enjoyed by a packed audience, and encores were the order of the day. A vote of thanks was passed to all who had assisted to make the Sale such a success, special mention being made of Miss Cleland and the Girl Guides, who were well to the fore, and assisted in every way. It is hoped when everything is settled up to have about £40 as a result of the Sale.

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